

JAZZ INFORMATION

VOL. I, No. 19

JANUARY 26, 1940

TEN CENTS

FREEMAN OPENS AT KELLY'S STABLE

Bud Freeman's Summa Cum Laude orchestra, which has been playing at Kelly's Stable, New York, since last Sunday, will have its formal opening at the 51st Street spot to-night (Friday). The band, now under the management of the William Morris agency, will stay indefinitely at Kelly's.

Except for two replacements, Dave Tough on drums and Pete Peterson, bass, the band remains the same: Max Kaminsky, cornet; Pee Wee Russell, clarinet; Freeman, tenor sax; Dave Bowman, piano; Eddie Condon, guitar. Brad Gowans, valve trombone and arranger now playing with Joe Marsala at the Fiesta, is expected to return to the Freeman organization soon.

Also at Kelly's is Kenny Watts and his Killerwatts, colored novelty band formerly at the Dickie Wells Club in Harlem.

Beginning this week the Freeman group will hold jam sessions every Sunday afternoon from 5 to 7, with various musicians present as guest stars. Other plans now being made have Eddie Condon leading special relief bands on Tuesdays, the band's off night.

JOHNNY DODDS PLAYING AGAIN

CHICAGO, Jan. 23.-- Johnny Dodds is playing clarinet again. Partly recovered from his recent serious illness, and reinstated in the musicians' union which recently expelled him for non-payment of dues, the beloved clarinet player opened Saturday night, January 20, at the 9750 Club, 9750 South Western Avenue, Chicago. Johnny is playing in a small combination with trumpeter Natty Dominique, Leo Montgomery on piano, and drummer Baby Dodds.

—Chicago—

CHICAGO, Jan. 22.-- Earl Hines and his band are out of the Grand Terrace, and just laying off. No work to speak of. Also, the Cabin Inn laid off Jimmy Noone, whose band seems on the verge of breaking up.

Horace Henderson has a very nice band down at 5100 Club. Its personnel is made up almost entirely of the men who were with "Smack" before he joined Benny Goodman. The band has a very hard-hitting brass section, rather smooth reeds, but

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NEW HOT RECORD LABEL ANNOUNCED

The General Records Company of New York City, an established recording concern, will shortly announce its entrance into the field of hot jazz discs.

Recordings produced by this company will be issued on its own "General" label, as well as on a subsidiary label designed for the coin phonographs.

Twenty sides have already been waxed in the company's studios, 1600 Broadway, and the first of these are to be released soon.

Further developments, including details of the recordings, will appear next week in Jazz Information.

Are Collectors Jerks?

SEE ALSO:
"WITLESS WHIT"
Page Two

"Phonies are a dime a dozen in the music business," as Eddie Condon once wrote. One of these phonies put himself down in print, in the January 15 Down Beat, under the name of R. Whitney Becker.

What Mr. "Becker" had to say about record collectors was, in a small degree, true; but it takes more than a grain of truth to leaven so great a mass of absurdities

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BEN WEBSTER JOINS ELLINGTON

BOSTON, Jan. 22.-- Ben Webster, well known tenor sax man formerly with Teddy Wilson, has joined Duke Ellington's orchestra, which is playing one-nighters around New

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

In order to resume as quickly as possible our regular schedule of Friday publication, which fell behind during the holidays, Jazz Information was not published on January 19, 1940. This issue, Number 19, dated January 26, is the first since Number 18, January 12. Subscribers, of course, will receive just as many weeks as they would have otherwise.

WETTLING LEADS RECORDING BAND ON THIRD DATE FOR DECCA CHICAGO ALBUM

Floyd O'Brien, Jess Stacy Are Featured In All Star Personnel

A pick-up band under the direction of George Wettling recorded four old tunes Monday morning, January 15, to complete the Decca album of "Chicago style".

Complete personnel was: Charles Teagarden, trumpet; Floyd O'Brien, trombone; Danny Polo, clarinet; Joe Marsala, tenor sax; Jess Stacy, piano; Jack Bland, guitar; Art Shapiro, bass; Wettling, drums. Titles made were "I've Found A New Baby", "Sister Kate", "Darktown Strutters Ball", and "Bugle Blues".

Teagarden, Shapiro and Wettling are members of Paul Whiteman's orchestra; O'Brien plays with Krupa, Stacy with Bob Crosby, and Polo with Joe Sullivan.

Other records to be included in the forthcoming album are four sides under Eddie Condon's name and four under Jimmy MacPartland.

The Condon waxings, made August

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MUGGSY'S RAGTIME BAND BOOKED?

CHICAGO, Jan. 23.-- Muggsy Spanier, cornet player and bandleader whose doings are the cause of endless rumors, is still with Ted Lewis at this writing, playing at the Lyric Theatre in Indianapolis. The Lewis band moves on to the Proctor Theatre in Columbus, Ohio, Friday.

Sid Beller, manager of Muggsy's Ragtime Band, and Bill Spanier, the cornetist's brother, told Jazz Information today that Muggsy will leave Lewis to open with his original Ragtime Band personnel, plus three additional men, in two weeks at an unnamed spot in Chicago or New York.

—New York—

NEW YORK, Jan. 24.-- Duke Ellington returns to the Savoy for another one-nighter this Sunday, January 28.

Bud Freeman's preview at Kelly's Stable brought out a crowd of musicians including Bunny Berigan, recently recovered from a serious illness, Claude Thornhill, Roy Eldridge, Floyd O'Brien and others. The only guest definitely set for the first Sunday jam session, so far, is Jess Stacy. Eddie Condon's

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WITLESS WHIT

R. Whitney Becker is a feenie.

This revelation will miff Becker (I hope), particularly since he doesn't know what a feenie is--I'm not quite sure myself, when it comes to that, having just invented the word after taking a gander at the piece in the Jan. 15 issue of Down Beat bearing the elegant headline: "Whitney Becker Charges Disc Collectors Are Jerks!" None of the old familiar cuss words or terms of derogation seemed adequate to describe the cluck who authored that tidbit, so -- he's a feenie. (It has a good nasty sound to it, and that's the main thing. From the evidence of his printed drool we are justified in concluding that nasty sounds are all Becker understands; and a reply to him must perforce be couched in his own scurrilous lingo.)

What's with this Becker? He gloms pennies off blind men, he bites little children, and he takes a satanic pleasure in kicking the crutches out from under cripples. More, he sleeps with his mouth open.

To be frank, I don't know "R. Whitney Becker" from Balaam's jackass, and I even question his existence -- as "R. Whitney Becker". (Three will get you ten that "R. Whitney Becker" isn't his right name. And he had reason to mask his identity with an alias. For in its time the self-styled "Musicians' Bible"--which the more intelligent musicians never read--has published some god-awful crap, but nothing half so crappy as this specific bunch of witless trap by "Becker". He might well be ashamed, thirty-third degree crap-artist though he is, to sign it with his own John Hancock.)

The point is that if my charges against him are ridiculous, those he levels against "platterbugs" are the same, but in spades. I don't know anything of Becker, and admit it; his knowledge of collectors is less than nil, and out of his ignorance he makes a fruity feature for Down Beat.

Only ignorance (and a sour stomach) could have led him to yawn that collectors aren't sincerely interested in jazz at all, that they go for rare plates just because they're rare. Well, the half-inch-thick Edison waxings are plenty rare, rarer than Gennetts of King Oliver's gang, but you won't find any of them in hot collections. And Lombardo Okeh's the "discomaniacs" leave to the Beckers, who think the Goodman of 1940 is jazz personified.

"Do 'collectors,' our feenie asks sneeringly, 'rush to get those Pan-assie reissues on Bluebird and Vic-

By Fred R. Miller

tor, or the Bessie Smiths Columbia reissued, or Bix's fine stuff in the Victor album?"

They don't, and why? Because most of them have the originals. The answer's so ludicrously obvious you'd think it would occur even to a lame brain like Becker.

To collectors any disc not out of print is by that token a stink-aroo, Becker burps. Collectors are choosy -- right. They've developed their taste through listening to the finest old recorded jazz, and naturally the commercial bilge released from week to week, the pancakes dear to the heart of Becker, don't take them in. But at whom do the record companies aim such discs as those cut by the Mezzrow-Ladnier group, Jelly Roll Morton's New Orleans Jazzmen, and Muggsy Spanier's Ragtime Band? Certainly not at the jitterbugs and the musically illiterate Beckers. In the supplements these waxings are listed as "collectors' items".

The number of collectors who are also dealers, digging up and selling rare wax for what's in it, can be counted on the buttons of Becker's shirt (assuming he wears a shirt, and not a bib), yet on the strength of the fact that many of them "send out badly typed, mimeographed lists" of their duplicates, he yowls that collecting has degenerated into a "rat race for guys trying to make big dough."

What, in his snide malice or abysmal ignorance, he fails to mention, is that the lists are nearly always accompanied by "want" lists -- the dupes are used in trading, and the valuation put on each is one of convenience; and when a bona fide collector does take cash for a record, he immediately turns around and blows it in on another record. By the way, I've got a flock of lists from various record aficionados, and nary a one gives any "musical comment" on the items listed. The "sample listing" Becker "quotes" must have appeared to him while he was hitting the weed.

His denouncement of collectors as "bores", however, is a prime example of unconscious, gut-busting humor, and makes you think of a loon in a straight-jacket calling his keepers crazy. It would be odd if collectors didn't discuss wax on gathering together -- and maybe now and then they do get off a little naive bragging about their collections; but at least they talk sense, which can't be said for feenie Becker.

He names several swingsters who, he says, have unburdened their bosoms to him in the wax whacks, and he "quotes" (a great quote, that boy) Condon as beefing: "They're like gnats.... They ask who played second kazop on a 1927 Okeh I don't

even remember making. They ask who sang the vocals on 1926 Brunswick's under the name of 'Billy Butt's Blackberries'." Most of the time I don't remember, and don't much want to. Dammit, it's a nuisance all around."

"Platterbugs" exercised over vocals and kazoops? That's a grade A horse-laugh. The silly willies in the habit of buttonholing musicians between sets and plying them with foolish questions are just kids, out to get the name of collectors. Some collectors wouldn't go across the street to hear the music of a present-day band. They stick at home and listen to records. Others may occasionally put questions to the boys; questions the answers to which will at some future time result in the compilation of a definitive discography; and human nature being what it is, it's not surprising that the boys should get a peeve on when they can't answer them. Who likes to fess up that he was loaded on a date, and therefore can't remember anything about it?

In passing, Becker takes a swipe at Jazz Information, a "little weekly rag" whose "only feature", according to him, is a collectors' column. As a subscriber to and booster for J.I., I'm here to state that, by me, a much more important feature is one Becker "overlooked" entirely, the column reviewing new hot releases. There would never have been any call for the "little weekly rag" had Down Beat given us the kind of honest and penetrating reviews we get here, and if Becker thinks the collecting "drivel" published in Down Beat "makes for funny reading", he ought to have himself a squint at the record criticism of Barrelhouse Dan in the same bladder. Laugh, I thought I'd die.

Which brings up the question: How come Down Beat opened its pages to this smelly tripe of Becker's? The editors wouldn't have been motivated by annoyance at the "little weekly rag" and its readers, would they? Perish the thought. J. I. isn't cutting in on Down Beat's circulation --- yet --- but you never can tell.

Of course there are a few jerks among collectors (and I could name you two or three out-and-out heels), as among musicians or any other group of hombres. For a jazz writer, though, and a Becker at that, to put in the zing against collectors wholesale, smearing them one and all with the abusive title of "jerks", and for Down Beat to publish his splenetic, hamburger-headed mouthings is, I submit, the height of feeneyism.

Gents, I give you R. Whitney (Witless Whit) Becker (not that you would take him -- except with a length of iron pipe). He isn't merely the crown prince of jerks. He's a feenie.

("Open up that window, and let that foul air out.")

Chicago

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a rough rhythm section. There are no outstanding soloists; but I'm very fond of Russ Smith, perhaps because he was so closely related to one of the greatest trumpets of all times, Joe Smith. I heard the band play "Stealin' Apples", and I most certainly missed Choo, Roy and Buster. But even with the lack of soloists, Horace's bunch sound good and are very popular.

King Kolax played at the Savoy with his band. The union drew out four men, causing the band to sound muddy; Kolax himself did nothing but bang out high Bbs all night long. The band was not up to par, and much rehearsing was obviously lacking; but Kolax himself seemed to think it was all right, which is good or bad as you care to look at it.

Walkathons seem to have the best bands in town. On the south side there's Artie Starck's terrific outfit, and now Tubby Hall has a very peculiar but very fine group on the north side. Darnell Howard is his featured soloist; trombone, trumpet, piano, bass, and Tubby on drums complete the band. The trombone player, known only as "Slide", is excellent. Tubby plays as always, and the band moves along on those three legs.

I saw Al Washington the other day, former tenor player with Louis Armstrong and Fats Waller. He's going to school now to learn more about music, arranging in particular, and gigging at night with Floyd Campbell. Campbell's band is a very poor outfit, Floyd himself playing drums and a nose-trumpet, which is too much for me. But Al still plays an awful lot of tenor.

Johnny Long's at the Swingland, but Bob Schaffner and Preston Jackson are no longer with him, leaving the band with much to be desired. John Levy's band, at the Club 65, is a fair outfit. The pianist, Jimmy Wood, plays a lot of piano; Russ Gillam, trumpet, and John Hartzfield, tenor, play very well on occasion, and Hilliard Brown, Kolax's old drummer, is steady.

John Lewis, the fine drummer who used to play with Albert Ammons at Hill's Tavern, is drumming with a small outfit at the 33 Club. Shorty McDonnell, the sensational little trumpet formerly with Bill Wright, is working at Martin's on the west side. Harlan Leonard played the Architects' Ball, and later at the Savoy. He sounded good at the Ball, but couldn't fill the Savoy. His brass haven't the guts or tone.

Bud Jacobson led an anti-Dixieland band the other night, which Franny Stanton got together. From all reports it was excellent. Lon-

nie Johnson is now working with a four piece combination at a Cock-tail Lounge on the south side.

Chicago's musical front has been badly damaged by the very cold weather, and many excellent musicians are out of work.

-- Donel O'Brien.

New York

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Tuesday night relief bands at the Stable may feature George Wettling and Artie Shapiro.

Johnny Martel, ex-Benny Goodman trumpet, replaced Frank Ryerson in Al Donahue's orchestra. Ryerson, and Cy Baker of the Jimmy Dorsey band, are joining Casa Loma.

Al Avola is back on guitar with

George Auld after an operation. Reports from the coast, incidentally, are that Shaw's comeback will take the form of a filmed story of his life, with a new band to be formed by manager Tommy Rockwell.

* Pee Wee Irwin now playing trumpet with Johnny Green... Joe Denton, sax man with Woody Herman, to be replaced by Herb Tompkins.

Sidney Bechet was in town for a day last week, but returned immediately to Finda, N. Y., where he now lives.

Les Hite's California band, and Slim Gaillard's novelty group, are at the 125th Street Apollo Theatre for one week beginning tonight.

Joe Marsala, who will remain at the Fiesta indefinitely, is planning to enlarge his band, now composed of seven pieces, to full size again.

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Bud Freeman

Dave Bowman

Opening

Friday

Jan 26

Kelly's Stables

presents

LOCAL 802

Summa Lm Laude

Bud Freeman and the

at

Kelly's Stables

41 W. 51st St. - Li. 7-9738

with

Eddie Condon

Steve Lough

Kenny Watts and his Killerwatts direct from a

twelve year run at Harlem's Dickie Wells

John D. Davis

"TAKE IT" BACK!

AN OPEN LETTER TO MR. JOHN O'HARA

My dear Mr. John O'Hara:

This remittance comes a little late, as some of ours do; regretfully, but we only recently saw your contribution "Take It" in the Dec. 27, 1939 issue of the New Republic. We owe the editors of Jazz Information gratitude for space in which to address one of your talent. (Your "Butterfield 8" number does not answer to us on this side of the tracks, so we have used the service entrance.)

That was a deft crack of yours at John Hammond, Mr. O. Evidently you, as Mr. Smith, "knows how to write" too, grabbing interest right off the reel, and everything. But what you probably don't know, Mr. O'Hara, is the purpose behind some of these activities and writings of Hammond and others. The greater part of that Ten Grand per year John Hammond spends discovering musicians could be tabbed "relief", because most of his proteges are pretty poor, and Negro, Italian, Polish, and the "wrong people" generally.

They don't come under the CBS expense account, or the Columbia Record subsidies, like Horace Heidt. Hammond has to feed many of them, and get them out of hock, so they can do their work. Other folks never paid much attention to these details, you see. That is, the people who "count" never did. The music they play never gets to the Rainbow Room and other joints you love, Mr. O'Hara. These boys have to be dug up.

Once upon a time your "part-time friend", Wilder Hobson, and F.P.A. discovered what promised to be a novelist in much the same way. They encouraged him, and helped him, and held out hopes for him for a long time. But meanwhile he wandered off to do some discovering on his own, and he happened upon the Stork Club, and Sutton Place, and Wilshire Boulevard, Mr. O'Hara, and it was really too bad he died. The point is: we all have to be discovered, by Hobson, or Hammond, or someone. Only those boys, for instance, do not demand Social Register, Tennis and Racquet, and 21 Club ratings. Most of their boys and girls just get by the Wassermann test, and they don't die in White Tie Lane either, Mr. O'Hara. Some of them even hold out until they are reached with bail money and a ham sandwich.

The same principle holds for what Charles Edward Smith and Frederic Ramsey, Jr., the editors of "Jazzmen", and their writers tried to do for these musicians and their music. We do not claim perfection for their book, but whatever it did or did not do, it presented fairly

well some phases of the historical development of an idiom in American folk music. Mr. Smith might not be as great a power on the New Yorker, or other smart sheets, as you, Mr. O'Hara. But he is a competent editor with some convictions. He had to corral some dozen different writers, so the result had to be an uneven one. Still it is a book worth keeping in the library, a distinction to which you look forward.

We do not bicker with the partial truth lying somewhere beneath your gaudy burlesque of the formulaized style of the non-fiction jazz book. To summarize this, you maintained that these were the elements of the stereotype: 1) obscure personal reminiscence; 2) fourth-hand research -- quoted; 3) an "atmosphere" anecdote; 4) a semi-classical literary allusion; 5) the vindictive slamming of a commercial idol (Whiteman), and canonization of a late, legendary god (Beiderbecke), and 6) a salute to the hot art of the noble, native Ethiopian.

We will grant that there has been some basis for your criticism of the formula. Such devices are phony, no matter where encountered. Worse, they are tempting, and "authorities" of great ignorance on various subjects overwork them. To attempt to simulate authoritative stature in fact, and to buttress conclusion by citing familiarity with hidden phases of a subject or with personalities in a movement is chicanery. George Jean Nathan used to love to do it, digging up some Balkan playwright. In fact, you yourself, Mr. O'Hara, belong to the guilty. You piled up indiscriminately an ill-assortment of jazzers in the jam session scene of your novel, "Butterfield 8". You yourself are a master of the half-digested catalogue of names, places and folkways. Your very analysis of such speciousness, the recurrence of it in your own stuff, proves the wheeze that the best thief-catchers are thieves. It is still baloney, whether you, Simms Campbell, or George Jean Nathan resort to its uses.

After all, Lord Bryce wrote great History about America, and he never once mentioned having tea with George Washington or a drink with Ulysses S. Grant to show he was in the know.

Then you pick a big fight over terminology and definition. What is "swing" and what is "jazz"? Well, take the next five bucks from the pittance to your genius from Messrs. Goldwyn and Ross, salvage the dough from disbursements at your pet taproom; then purchase Winthrop Sargeant's book, "Jazz: Hot and Hybrid". There, in lucid, scientific, critical terms with evidence, you can satisfy your scholarly passion

for fact and precept. Sargeant's technical data is not mere padding for hot-air authenticity. When Sargeant concludes, for instance, that the Negro created jazz and blues forms out of other musical roots, he presents material, analysis, and Q.E.D., just as though he were discussing the form of the fugue. And, by the way, his standards and values place your particular boy, Paul Whiteman, on the dunghill throne of the King of the Jazz Hybrids. Furthermore, he bears out the truthful spirit of the Hammond definition of swing/jazz (take one) as being improvisations, rhythmically coordinated.

So quarrel over terms if you like, language changes--thank goodness -- and if one term supplants another, at least we have a living tongue. Peek into Mencken's slang analyses of 1926, and see if some of the stuff doesn't sound corny today. By the same token by which you assail Hobson, Hammond, Smith and the "enthusiasts" as fraud, your own writing proclaims you little more than a shill for Sex minus profundity. And that, too, Mr. O'Hara, is old stuff in streamlined bottles. You dish up the synthetic soil of language pretty well yourself, and it lacks the rich, earthy qualities of plain, peasant dirt.

Such an authority as you will no doubt term us a johnny-come-lately in jazz. We have never corrected George Gershwin, as have you, although we have assured ourselves that his "Porgy and Bess" got as near to a Charleston Negro folk opera as Forsythe Street. We have never espoused Whiteman, and we have not got the dough to collect platters. Never, as you, has columnist Leonard Lyons recounted our posing as a hep-guy on jazz in the clawss bistros. We have been tolerated at considerable numbers of jam sessions, however, and musicians and arrangers have spoken frankly around us for years without pulling their punches. (The intelligentsia had not then clasped jazz to frail bosoms.) Unqualified as we are to state this, Mr. O'Hara, we doubt like hell if you ever attended a jam session where white tie, a honey, and tails were not more important than what the musicians were playing. We should really like to see your reactions to a session where you did not give a damn whether Winchell or Lyons were there to plug you or not. And the fact that you do not like the term swing, or do not believe that it exists, has not a thing to do with the truth of the matter.

In parting, Mr. O'Hara, the enthusiasts you cursed out have served some effective purpose in their writings and in their activities. The editors and writers of "Jazzmen", and the Hot Record Society people, and others, have at least succeeded in rescuing and establishing some records of American

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NEW RECORDS

YOUNG MAN WITH A HORN: BIX BEIDERBECKE and THE WOLVERINES (Hot Record Society Album No. 2). By the Wolverines: Fidgety Feet (HRS 22); Sensation (HRS 23); Big Boy--Tiger Rag (HRS 24); Jazz Me Blues -- Oh Baby (HRS 25); Tia Juana -- Royal Garden Blues (HRS 26). By Bix and his Rhythm Jugglers: Davenport Blues (HRS 22); Toddlin' Blues (HRS 23). Personnels listed on labels.

For its second album of reissues the Hot Record Society has selected ten sides by Bix Beiderbecke (eight with the Wolverine Orchestra, two of Bix's Rhythm Jugglers). The masters from which the reissues have been pressed were dubbed, from the Gennett originals, several years ago, for English Brunswick. And, to mention the least important point first, the dubbings are technically uneven. Some are good; on others the reproduction is foggy, and on "Royal Garden Blues" the dubbing needle actually skipped a groove. Comparison of the current prices of Gennetts, however, with the price at which these reissues have been made available, places these facts in their proper perspective.

And these recordings, of course, are invaluable to the student of Bix. They show a less mature musician than Bix's later discs, true; but, on the other hand, they are the only ones which show the young man with a horn playing with a permanent band of authentically jazz structure. There are always the Whitemans and Goldkettes and Carmichaels in which Bix took a solo, or a break; there are Frank Trumbauer's rather half-hearted pickup waxings, and Bix's own records with his own pickup band. But only these records of the Wolverines show Bix as a member of a small jazz band, following the jazz tradition as it had been expressed by the Dixieland Band, the New Orleans Rhythm Kings and King Oliver's Creole Band.

No one, we think, has considered the Wolverines as a great band. It was a young band, short-lived, and never reached its maturity. But for what it was, it was good; following the best models, playing the best tunes, and always following its best musician, Beiderbecke.

So there's no listening to this album merely for Bix's solo work. There are solos, to be sure; an extraordinarily melodic chorus on the "Royal Garden Blues", a restrained solo in "Jazz Me Blues", excited solos in "Oh Baby" and "Tiger Rag", and so forth. There are other solos: some acceptable low-register clarinet work by Jimmy Hartwell, a few poor tenor solos of George Johnson's, even one hardly noteworthy piano solo by Bix. But most of the records are the Wolverines'

ensemble; and it's for the ensemble, and Bix's part in it, that they should be heard.

Not that the Wolverines' ensemble was by any means perfect. On some of these sides, in fact, it's downright amateurish. On others, though, the kids got together behind Bix and really played with drive and conviction. The best sides, at a rapid recount, are "Oh Baby", which has a pretty excited jump, and the three sides which, as Charles Edward Smith remarks in his leaflet with the album, show most clearly the influences of the Wolverines: "Royal Garden Blues", for King Oliver, "Sensation" and "Fidgety Feet" for the Dixieland Jazz Band. "Tiger Rag", "Jazz Me Blues", and "Big Boy" are also acceptable; only "Tia Juana" is really bad.

A special word should be said for "Davenport Blues" and "Toddlin' Blues", which were recorded by Bix and a pick-up band including Tommy Dorsey and Don Murray, shortly after Bix had joined Jean Goldkette's orchestra. The men were better musicians than the Wolverines, though doubtless less used to playing together; and the results might well have compared to Bix's best work -- except that, as Charles Edward Smith puts it, the boys got into the bottle before they got into the wax. The product was two pathetically disorganized sides, on which nevertheless ("Toddlin'" especially) Bix and Murray were feeling the music.

These few remarks, evidently, do not pretend to the definitive word either on Bix Beiderbecke as a cornetist, or on the Wolverines as an orchestra. Those who are already familiar with the Gennetts need no review; while those who aren't, had better listen to this album pretty carefully.

TOMMY DORSEY'S Orchestra (V1 26437) Milenberg Joys, Parts 1 and 2. Andy Ferretti, Yank Lawson, Lee Castaldo, trumpets; Tommy Dorsey, D. Jacobs, Ward Silloway, E. Smithers, trombones; Freddie Stulce, Johnny Mince, Babe Russin, Skeets Herfurt, Dean Kincaide, reeds; Howard Smith, piano; Carmen Mastren, guitar; Gene Traxler, bass; Dave Tough, drums.

This is Tommy Dorsey's best record in a long time; and it was recorded a long time ago. A grand old number, well arranged for a big band with clear, powerful brassy, "Milenberg Joys" gives the band's soloists and ensemble full display; and it isn't at all too long for its six minutes. High spot of the first side is Yank Lawson's long, jabbing trumpet solo, made up of few notes and short ones, backed by Dave Tough's cymbal. The second side is increasingly good, working

through Dorsey's trombone chorus, Mince's clarinet and Russin's tenor to a big, brassy conclusion. Tough's drumming, again, is largely responsible for the excitement of the side.

HARRY JAMES' Orchestra (Co 35340) Concerto For Trumpet -- I'm In The Market For You. Harry James, Jack Palmer, Claude Bowen, Jack Schaeffer, trumpets; Truett Jones, Dalton Rizzotti, Bruce Squires, trombones; Dave Matthews, Drew Page, Claude Lakey, Bill Luther, saxes; Jack Gardner, piano; Red Kent, guitar; Thurman Teague, bass; Micky Scrima, drums.

"Concerto For Trumpet" is as vile a monstrosity of bad taste as has ever been designated a masterpiece. The one small point that might be made in its favor is that James unquestionably succeeds in hitting every note he tries for. Very few of them are worth hearing. On the coupling, naturally enough, he plays simply and with much more discrimination.

COUNT BASIE'S Orchestra (Co 35338) Hollywood Jump -- Someday Sweetheart. Ed Lewis, Buck Clayton, Shad Collins, Harry Edison, trumpets; Benny Morton, Dickie Wells, Dan Minor, trombones; Earl Warren, Jack Washington, Lester Young, Buddy Tate, saxes; Count Basie, piano; Freddie Green, guitar; Walter Page, bass; Jo Jones, drums.

"Hollywood Jump" is characteristically Basie, as far as the "jump" part goes; outstanding in it is the brilliant, effortless chorus played by Lester Young against the three trombones. "Someday Sweetheart", a tune which might well be played entirely without "jump", opens with Basie's piano fronting the saxes, turns into a muted solo by Clayton and features a Helen Humes vocal.

GLENN HARDMAN'S Hammond Five (Co 35341) China Boy -- On The Sunny Side Of The Street. Lee Castaldo, trumpet; Lester Young, tenor sax; Glenn Hardman, Hammond organ; Freddie Green, guitar; Jo Jones, drums.

"Upright Organ Blues" remains the most nearly successful waxing of this rather special group, Hardman's organ playing is even more objectionable in the two new sides than it was on the others, and the lack of a steady tempo in "China Boy" is another bringdown. However, Castaldo and Young both have plenty to say.

BILLIE HOLIDAY (Vo 5302) You're A Lucky Guy -- You're Just A No Account. Billie Holiday, vocal; accompanied by Buck Clayton, Harry Edison, trumpets; Earl Warren, Lester Young, Jack Washington, saxes; Joe Sullivan, piano; Freddie Green, guitar; Walter Page, bass; Jo Jones, drums.

This is good, though Billie has sung better. The band, composed of
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JAZZ INFORMATION

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COLLECTORS' ITEMS

At the recording date that produced the famous Perry Bradford's Jazz Phools' "Lucy Long -- I Ain't Gonna Play No Second Fiddle" (Vocalion 15165), four sides were made according to Bradford himself. Only those two were issued, however; "Hateful Blues", and a fourth side which he doesn't remember, appear to have been lost. The band at this date, besides Louis Armstrong, included James P. Johnson and Fats Waller, pianos; and Don Redman, alto sax.

The cornet player on Bradford's Okeh record of "Lucy Long", however, is Johnny Dunn, who also recorded with Bradford under the name of the Georgia Strutters, on Harmony, and the Gulf Coast Seven, on Columbia. Besides Dunn these discs, which many of our readers have inquired about, feature Garvin Bushell, clarinet; "Brass" Field, drums; and "Speed", banjo.

This information was obtained from Perry Bradford by Dan Qualey of Brooklyn, sponsor of Solo Art Records.

* * *

We are glad to report that Elmer Schoebel, now chief arranger for Music Publishers Holding Corporation in New York, has been able to clear up, partially at least, the four sides by the Original Memphis Melody Boys mentioned in our December 22 issue. ("Make A Monkey Out Of Me -- Wonderful Dream", Gennett 5123, "Blue Grass Blues -- There's No Gal Like My Gal", Gennett 5157.)

Mr. Schoebel writes:

"....the records mentioned were made by me and my orchestra. "Make A Monkey Out Of Me" was sung by Billy Meyers, the original Monkey Man of Chicago, assisted by the Memphis Melody Boys of which I was the musical director at that time.

"Blue Grass Blues" and "There's No Gal Like My Gal" also were of the same recordings. The clarinet was played by 'Wingy' -- incidentally, not Wingy Manone. The trumpet was played by Murphy Steinberg. George Brunies did not play trombone.

"We made a special trip to Richmond, Indiana, to record for the Starr Piano Company. This band however was known under the name of Memphis Melody Boys and Chicago Blue Dance Orchestra."

* * *

Arnold Klein of Baltimore tells us that he spoke to James P. Johnson concerning the Victor-Bluebird recordings of the Louisiana Sugar Babies. James P. told him that he was contractor on the date, remembers it perfectly, and that it was Jabbo Smith, not Joe Smith, who played trumpet on those records. Since Jabbo, himself, has said he played this date (according to Alfred Lion), and Dan Qualey informs us that Jabbo's presence has been confirmed by Perry Bradford also, there should be no more difficulty about these sides. Especially considering the fact that they aren't very good.

* * *

William C. Love of Nashville, Tennessee, writes that the Dixieland Jug Thumpers' Paramount 12594 "Oriental Man" (20240) -- "Sock That Thing" (20241) seems to be exactly the same combination as the Dadds -- Dominique -- Blythe group on Okeh. Dadds is fine on this record. The State Street Ramblers' "Cootie Stomp -- Weary Way Blues", Gennett 6232 (no masters) appears to be nearly the same group, with Dadds again prominent.

He also has Fletcher Henderson's piano solos of "Chimes Blues" and "I Want To" on Paramount 12143, a combination Paramount-Black Swan label that reads "formerly Black Swan No. 2116".

"Weary Blues" and "Up The Country", by Barbecue Joe and his Hot Dogs, Love adds, was originally issued on Gennett 7320 (no masters); and he believes that the other four sides made by Wingy Mannone under that name were also on Gennett.

Bill has discovered two masters of Trixie Smith's "Mining Camp Blues" (Paramount 12256), with two quite different Louis solos. Also two masters of Henderson's "Copenhagen" with Louis (Vocalion 14988), and King Oliver's "Dippermouth", "Weather Bird", and "Canal Street Blues", all Gennetts. Last, he had a Cow Cow Davenport on the Super-tone label, "Struttin' The Blues" and "Atlanta Rag".

Speaking of Cow Cow, Hoyte Kline reports that Cow Cow himself told him that he had made the Charlie Segar Decca solos, which we have

mentioned several times. Cow Cow's memory, however, is not dependable. He also said he did the Steamboat Bill and some other accompaniments like Bessie Jackson, etc. Most of this is doubtful, Kline comments, and hard to confirm.

* * *

Charles Rogers of Trenton, N.J., has turned up a copy of "the rarest of the Armstrongs": the Vocalion No. 15632 of Johnny Dodds and his Black Bottom Stompers playing "New Orleans Stomp" (23) and "Weary Blues" (21). "Without quarreling with Lil as a pianist," he remarks, "I can easily see that the dream band would have been the early Louis Hot Five, with Earl Hines and Baby Dodds." He would like to know who plays the saxophone on this record -- the same man, we assume, as in the much better known "Melancholy" and "Wild Man Blues".

* * *

John H. Baker of Columbus, Ohio, writes in reference to Keith Lees' discography of the Alabama Red Peppers (Jan. 5 issue) that "Red Head Blues" and "The Drag" were issued not only on Perfect, but also on Pathe 36841, under the name of Kentucky Hot Hoppers; no master numbers.

Also referring to Lees' record information, George Avakian writes that the clarinet on the Louisiana Rhythm Kings' "That's A Plenty" is definitely Fud Livingstone, as Lees thought, and couldn't possibly be Benny Goodman.

BEN WEBSTER JOINS ELLINGTON

(Continued from Page 1)

England this week after packing them in at the Southland here.

The addition of Webster, who had played with such famous bands as Bennie Moten, Fletcher Henderson, Cab Calloway, Willie Bryant, John Kirby, and Roy Eldridge before he joined Wilson's new band last year, gives the Duke a five-piece reed section, as well as a soloist to be featured on tenor sax. It is reported that other additions may be made soon, increasing the brass section to as many as ten men.

Bass player Billy Taylor, after four years with the band, is leaving. He had been playing side by side with Jimmy Blanton, Duke's new bass virtuoso formerly with Fate Marable, for several weeks.

Classified

DON'T FORGET: Our first classified ad column, in the February 9 Jazz Information; deadline February 5. Available to private individuals only at the nominal rate of 15 cents a line (24 letters to each line). Remittance should accompany copy.

NEW RECORDS

(Continued from Page 5)

nine Basie men and Joe Sullivan, is the largest Billie has ever used for a recording under her own name; and accordingly plays much more ensemble background than her earlier recording bands. There are a few good solos; but Joe Sullivan's sensitive piano backing is most noteworthy.

ROY ELDRIDGE'S Orchestra (Va 8154, 8144) High Society -- Muskrat Ramble; Does Your Heart Beat For Me -- Who Told You I Cared. Roy Eldridge, Bobby Williams, trumpets; Eli Robinson, trombone; Prince Robinson, Joe Eldridge, Franz Jackson, saxes; Kenneth Carsey, piano; John Collins, guitar; Ted Sturgis, bass; David Francis, drums.

"High Society" is a botched and tasteless job; "Muskrat Ramble" is much better, although Eldridge's colorful extravagances contrast strangely with the brisk Dixieland tune. Franz Jackson's performance of the clarinet chorus in "High Society" is very disappointing; the alto chorus on the coupling, maybe also by him, is better. High spots of both sides are excellent tenor solos. On the pops, Roy plays in a less pyrotechnic vein, with good results; but shows himself careless with the mute.

LIONEL HAMPTON'S Orchestra (Vi 26-453) The Munson Street Breakdown -- I Can't Get Started. Lionel Hampton, vibraphone; Ziggy Elman, trumpet; Toots Mondello, Jerry Jerome, Ben Webster, saxes; Clyde Hart, piano; Al Casey, guitar; Artie Bernstein, bass; Slick Jones, drums.

Much better than the recent run of Hampton records, "Munson Street" is an inoffensive little number featuring two improved choruses of Lionel's two-finger piano, a bit of Ben Webster's tenor, and Jerome on clarinet. "I Can't Get Started" is very slow, relaxed, and consists mostly of Hampton's vibraphone improvisation. In this tempo, Hampton gives up his usual flashy display and improvises somewhat in the Teddy Wilson manner, with delicate line and phrasing. No vocals.

JIMMY MUNDY'S Orchestra (Va 8148) Sunday Special -- All Aboard. Frank Galbreath, Bobby Moore, Leroy Hill, trumpets; Ed Johnson, John McConnell, Norman Green, trombones; Ted Barnett, Al Gibson, James Hamilton, Skippy Williams, saxes; Bill Doggett, piano; Connie Wainwright, guitar; Jack Jarvis, bass; Rossiere Wilson, drums.

Mundy's orchestra performs these rather mechanical originals quite competently. The soloists are passable but imitative; Bill Doggett, on piano, comes nearest to achieving some distinction.

LONNIE JOHNSON (BB 8338) The Love-

less Blues --- Four O Three Blues. There's plenty of evidence of Lonnie Johnson's versatile talents in these two sides. The first, a song based on the old "Loveless Love" theme, is accompanied by Lonnie's guitar in simple ballad style. On the second side, a more traditional blues, Lonnie's singing and guitar playing is also accompanied by the fine blues piano of Joshua Althamer.

WOODY HERMAN'S Orchestra (De 2933) Blues On Parade -- Love's Got Me Down. The "Blues" is a pleasant, relaxed piece of music with witty arranging for muted brass, some good trumpet (Cappy Lewis?), an amusing bass solo by Walter Yoder, plus alto and tenor solos which are less noteworthy. The parade part of the title refers to an unconvincing march theme which begins and ends the record.

ROSETTA HOWARD (De 7687) My Downfall -- Delta Bound. Rosetta Howard sings a pair of good songs with two different groups of Decca studio men behind her. On "My Downfall" they're Shavers, Bailey, Lill Armstrong, Livingston, Braud and Spencer on trumpet, clarinet, piano, guitar, bass and drums respectively. Shavers plays one of his loud open horn choruses, but makes up for it with some sensitive, quiet background work. The other side is good, too, with an unusual muted trumpet; personnel was not available when this column was written.

BOB CROSBY'S Orchestra (De 2935) I Wanna Wrap You Up --- Between 18th And 19th On Chestnut Street. The second side of this coupling rates mention as another in the long series of vocal novelty duets, the low voice being supplied in this case by Eddie Miller, and the falsetto by Nappy Lamare. Well performed, with a Stacy solo which doesn't contribute anything, and a satisfying piano background to the vocal.

TEDDY POWELL'S Orchestra (De 2941) Pussy In The Corner -- Some Day. Powell's band shows a surprising talent for the Savoy style in these two originals. "Pussy In The Corner" is a jump tune of the Basie type, while "Some Day" is a memory of "Stompin' At The Savoy". Both are well played, with a scattering of competent solos on trumpet, tenor and clarinet.

NOTES

Pete Johnson's Blue Note recordings of "You Don't Know My Mind -- Holler Stomp" and "Barrelhouse Breakdown -- Kansas City Farewell", released last week, will be reviewed in the next number of Jazz Information.

We learn from our special Basie correspondent, Donald Wolf, that the muted trumpet solos in the Count's "Evil Blues" (De 2922) were played by Ed Lewis.

TOOTS MONDELLO (Royale 1817, 1823) Burnin' Sticks -- Here's Your Change; Shades Of Jade -- Sweet Lullaby. Toots Mondello, alto sax solos, accompanied by Claude Thornhill, piano; Nick Fatool, drums.

These four alto solos are of no interest from the hot point of view; and the first two, merely displays of virtuosity, have no musical interest at all. "Shades Of Jade" and "Sweet Lullaby" are occasionally interesting in their melody. Toots Mondello, though far from being a great hot man, can do much better than this.

WINGIE MANONE'S Orchestra (BB 10-560) When The Saints Go Marching In -- Sudan. Wingie Manone, trumpet and vocal; Buck Scott, trombone; Gus Fetterer, clarinet; Chu Berry, tenor; Ernie Hughes, piano; Zeb Julian, guitar; Sid Jacobs, bass; Cozy Cole, drums.

Wingie Manone turns out two lively sides. On the first, an acceptable version of the traditional New Orleans tune, there's interesting work by Buck Scott, Fetterer, Chu, and Wingie.

ERSKINE HAWKINS' Orchestra (BB 10-565) Baltimore Bounce --- I Hadn't Anyone Till You. The "Bounce" is an undistinguished and not too well played original by Hawkins and his trumpet Sam Lowe, featuring brass crescendos in Southwestern-band style. The reverse is played in pop fashion, but comes out neater.

LEE BROWN (De 7686) Little Brown Skin Girl -- My Driving Wheel. Lee Brown has made better records than this. His singing style, is a simple, rough way, is good. The accompaniment by mouth-harp, piano, guitar and drums, is not very good.

AL COOPER and the Savoy Sultans (De 2930) Jumpin' The Blues --- When I Grow Too Old To Dream. The Sultans never get tired. The first side is a jump blues, typical of Basie's style, but much inferior.

New York

(Continued from Page 3)

Mal Hallett opens at the Roseland January 27. Edgar Hayes' band, with Wellman Braud still on bass, plays the Brooklyn Roseland Saturday and Sunday nights this weekend.

In the Village, Billie Holiday is singing at Ernie's, Pat Flowers playing piano at the Pirate's Den, while Nick's and Cafe Society keep the same shows.

Harry James, leaving Columbia Records at the end of his present contract, has signed to record for United States Records.

Shorty Sherock, trumpet with Bob Crosby's orchestra, is leaving the Dixielanders to play in Gene Krupa's outfit. Replacing him in the Crosby band is Eddie Ware.

VARSITY SEVEN HAS REPEAT SESSION

The Varsity Seven, mixed recording band whose first records were just issued by the United States Record Corporation, held its second session at the Varsity studios Monday night, January 15.

Personnel of the band, which was unchanged from the first session, includes: Benny Carter, alto sax and trumpet; Coleman Hawkins, tenor sax; Danny Polo, clarinet; Joe Sullivan, piano; Ulysses Livingston, guitar; Art Shapiro, bass; George Wettling, drums.

Joe Turner, blues singer with the Boogie Woogie Trio at the Cafe Society, replaced Jeanne Burns as vocalist with the group, and sang two titles: "How Long Blues", and "Shake It And Break It". The band also recorded, without vocals, "A Pretty Girl Is Like A Melody" and "Pom Pom", a new Carter tune.

ARE COLLECTORS JERKS?

(Continued from Page 1)
and silly gossip. Fred R. Miller's reply, on page two of this issue, expresses to a large extent Jazz Information's own attitude.

Mr. "Becker's" sour little reference to this publication will not confuse anybody. Least of all will it confuse our readers; who, rather than a mere "handful of collectors", include followers of jazz, collectors and musicians in thirty-four states.

But, who is Mr. "Becker"? We asked Eddie Condon, whose opinions on collectors were quoted at length in the Down Beat article. Condon told us he'd never heard of him -- further, he doesn't remember making the remarks "Becker" quoted.

We asked Jeffrey Fuller, who was foolishly insulted by "Becker". He, too, had never heard of the guy. No one of that name is listed in the New York telephone directory. If he's a musician, Local 802 has never heard of him. And at various hangouts for jazz fans of all descriptions, his name is unknown. Yet, he says he "bumps into" Muggsy, Condon, Freeman, Teagarden and Goodman!

Who is "R. Whitney Becker"? It's only a coincidence, we hope, that his manner of expressing himself so closely resembles the ebullient style of Down Beat's Associate Editor Dave Dexter, Jr. For if it should turn out that there is no Mr. "Becker", if this unlikely name conceals one of Down Beat's own editors, the "Musician's Bible" will stand convicted not only of irresponsible thickheadedness, but of the lowest kind of journalistic fraud.

It doesn't really matter much, but we're a little curious. Who is R. Whitney Becker?

TONY PASTOR MAKES FIRST RECORDS

Tony Pastor's new band, now playing one-nighters around New England, made its first four records for Bluebird last week. The band was augmented, for the recordings, by Andy Ferretti, trumpet, and Moe Zudekoff, trombone.

Pastor's regular personnel: Bill Robbins, Irving Berger, Charles Trotta, trumpets; Leonard Ray, L. Aulino, Cappy Crouse, trombones; Bill Shine, Leonard Ross, Grey Rains, John Wade, Pastor, saxes; John Nicolini, piano; Frank Isnardi, guitar; Marvin Wittstein, bass; Bill Schultz, drums.

WETTTLING COMPLETES CHICAGO ALBUM

(Continued from Page 1)

11 in New York, are "Friar's Point Shuffle", "There'll Be Some Changes Made", "Nobody's Sweetheart", and "Someday Sweetheart". This band included Max Kaminsky, cornet; Brad Gowans, valve trombone; Pee Wee Russell, clarinet; Bud Freeman, tenor sax; Joe Sullivan, piano; Condon, guitar; Clyde Newcomb, bass; and Dave Tough, drums.

MacPartland's date, held October 10 in Chicago, produced "China Boy", "Jazz Me Blues", "The World Is Waiting For The Sunrise", and "Sugar"; his personnel was Jimmy, cornet; Bud Jacobson, clarinet; Boyce Brown, alto; Floyd Bean, piano; Dick MacPartland, guitar; Jim Lannigan, bass; Hank Isaacs, drums.

The album, containing six discs and a booklet by George Avakian, is to be released by Decca about March first.

HOT LIPS PAGE RECORDS FOR DECCA

Hot Lips Page, Kansas City trumpet player, recorded six sides for Decca Tuesday, January 23, with Jim Powell, alto sax; Buster Smith, clarinet and alto; Sam Davis, tenor; Jim Reynolds, piano; Abe Bolan, bass; and Ed Connery, drums.

"TAKE IT" BACK!

(Continued from Page 4)
music. They have rehabilitated a few of the men and women who created it. You, on the other hand, have not even rehabilitated your own creative faculties in such stuff as "Take It". You have only tried to establish the fact that you are a one-horse authority on jazz, and to hell with the other boys, even part-time friends. You have served no constructive purpose, not even your own. We, for instance, once did a piece for Collier's on Boogie-Woogie piano, and although bad, it at least helped the musicians make a livelihood. And it was an honest job of reporting. In this there was at least sincerity of purpose. We regret we cannot say as much, Mr. O'Hara, for you.

Sincerely yours,

Edward Morrow.

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